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TABLE OF CONTENTS

FEATURES

FAKES V. AMULETS II: Of Indonesian Bullets, Bent Sixpences, and Other Matters, <i>by Bob Forrest</i>	233
Passion's Paragon - Chapter #8, <i>by Robert Turfboer</i>	244
The Birons of Courland, <i>by John S. Davenport</i>	250

DEPARTMENTS

Book News & Reviews	249
From the Mailbox	232
Member Notice Page	252

INSIDE N.I.

Librarian's Report	231
Membership Chairman's Report	231

OTHER ITEMS

A Briet History of the Netherlands and Coins - Chapter 9, <i>by Kees Pannekeet</i>	246
Copeck	243
"Lanchau Coppers"	252
Some Unique or Very Rare European Dollars #17, <i>by John S. Davenport</i> ---	248

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INSIDE N.I.

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

September, 1998 Applications for Membership: The following person has applied for membership. If no written objections are received by November 1, 1998, his application will become effective on that date.

2528-MT Sanford Durst, 11 Clinton Avenue, Rockville Centre, NY 11570
(Ancient & Foreign Coins, Books)

Correction from July New Member Listing:

2526-MT J. Roberto Jovel was listed in error as J. Roberto Joval.

* * * * *

LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

I. The following books are new to the Library:

Marvin Fraley

QB30.KleG:1973:EP
KLENAU, GRAF
Ethnologica and primitivgeld
Pub. 1973, ca48pp, illus. (sales catalog)

SD60.PiJa:1971:NR
PIA, JACK
Nazi regalia
Pub. 1971, ca160pp, illus.

Jerry King

AA50.RooA:1987:DCN
ROOM, ADRIAN
Dictionary of coin names
Pub. 1987, 250pp, illus.

II. We would also like to thank Jerry King for his additional donation of numismatic material to the NI Library. Among this material was the second edition of Colin Bruce's *Unusual World Coins*, along with many coin magazines and auction catalogs.

Granvyl G. Hulse, Jr., Book Librarian
James D. Haley, Periodical Librarian

FROM THE MAILBOX

Forrest's "Cocktails" article gets response concerning Fig. 9

Fig. 9 in your latest paper ("Cocktails", June 1998, p.161) recalled many pleasant overland trips in S.E. Asia. From the first (late 1968), these pictorial pieces, often with Koranic themes and personalities/butterfly, were already available in Singapore and Malaysia, nicely cast and in respectable alloys. To quote my travelogue in *Report of the Australian Numismatic Society XXXIII* (12), July 1969 (my first article on coins): "Another series of which I collected several were religious pieces, some obviously modelled after the British trade dollar but with Koranic (Muslim) themes, some tending more to the medallic and some degenerating to figures from the Hindu Ramayana epic and clearly copied from the common Javanese shadow-puppet shows. One, but only one, was frankly Buddhist, with symbols (moon, sun, flame) I later saw playfully inked on the backs of schoolgirls' hands in Bangkok. I am still vague as to the exact nature of these pieces - some dealers said they were tokens used on the pilgrimage to Mecca and none sounded sure of himself."

But over the next decade, or even two, the number and variety of types proliferated as quickly as the casting and alloys went bad. (Un)fortunately, while they are still common enough on street-stalls - with trinkets, quack potions, 'ticklers' - in smaller towns, the better dealers now ignore them, except for the occasional nice piece.

I no longer have my small collection, but common - though not universal - features that I recall are:

1. The names Allah and Mohammed.
2. The names of the four caliphs ('Omar and 'Othman which I think I see on the 'outside' at 3 o'clock, and 'Ali and Abu Bakar at 10 o'clock - I say think because the link or non-link between the letters is not always wholly clear. Could the phrase 'inside' the first two names be *bismillah* (in the name of Allah, with b, s, m unconnected)? I don't recognise the phrase at 12 o'clock (presumably not related to the qualities often associated with the caliphs, e.g. Plant, pp. 36, 114).
3. The word *Yasin* which may, *may* be between the birds' tails. This can be (a) colloquial for Husain, Hussein, whatever (Plant, p. 54); or (b) the chapter of the Koran (37) read to the dying.

Keep in mind the direct-image/mirror-image motif if some of the other bits in the middle are indeed words rather than a plant-motif. See, e.g. doubled Kerajaan/Government on Trengganu ½ c A.H. 1322, KM 16.

Robert Domrow
Woolloowin, Australia

FAKES V. AMULETS II: OF INDONESIAN BULLETS, BENT SIXPENCES, AND OTHER MATTERS.

Bob Forrest, Manchester, England, NI #2382

Early in 1997 a dealer friend of mine handed me a plastic bag containing what looked like a small cannon ball, with two smaller musket balls, and three variously shaped lumps of metal, all decorated with assorted spirals and squiggles which were here and there obscured by patches of rust. One of the musket balls is illustrated below (Fig. 1). All were made of iron, as the approach of a magnet readily proved, and they looked old. My first reaction was that they were something akin to Thai bullet money, though of a type I'd never seen before. My dealer friend agreed.

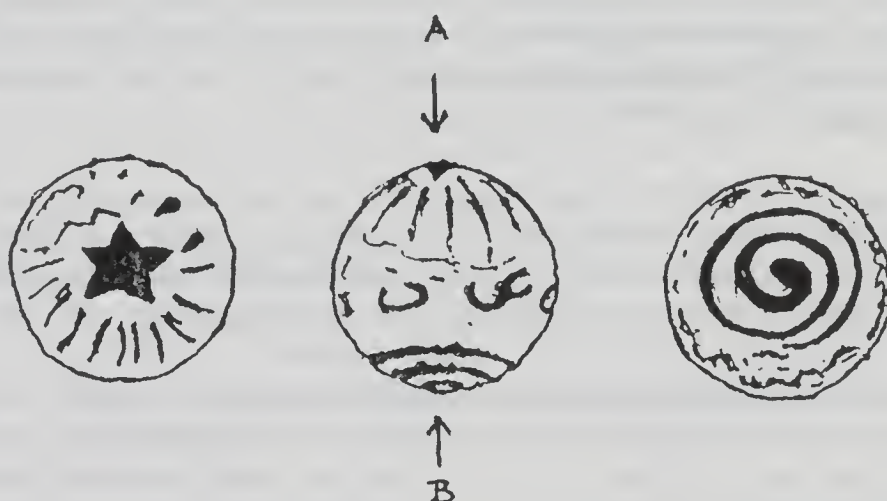


Fig. 1. One of the smaller balls (enlarged):

The middle diagram is a typical side-view. The diagram on the left is the top, viewed from A; that on the right, the bottom viewed from B. The star, swirl & Arabic script etc are all in relief. Actual diameter about 12-13 mm.

On getting them home I couldn't find their like in any book on my shelves. Luckily I didn't think to look in Mitchiner's *World of Islam*, or I would have followed his lead and mis-attributed them to 19th century Indonesia. Instead, admitting defeat, I rang up another dealer friend of mine, who trades in oriental coins, to see if he could tell me anything. Almost before I'd gotten to the end of the first sentence of my description of these things, he had recalled a strange tale of some 20 years ago. He couldn't remember precise details off-hand - merely that they were some kind of fake or fantasy that hit the oriental coin market in the 1970's. Within a couple of days he had drummed up the key references for me.

The tale had unfolded in the pages of the *Oriental Numismatic Society Newsletter*, beginning in 1976 (issue 46) with the following paragraph:

"Scott Semans has recently received a group of 100 pieces of 'Borneo iron bullet money', irregularly rounded pieces with designs and barbarous Arabic inscriptions, weighing 5 to 10 grammes each. Can any member provide background information and confirm, or otherwise, their use as money?"

There was a striking parallel here between Scott Semans' situation back in 1976 and my own here in 1997 which brought to mind the old saying about history repeating itself! But to continue with the tale of woe.

In early 1977 (issue 47), Ken Wiggins and Michael Mitchiner produced a couple of old literary references to iron-bar currency in 18th and 19th century Borneo, plus another old reference to the use of engraved iron bars at marriage ceremonies in Celebes in about 1700. It was apparently these references which led to Mitchiner's inclusion of "Borneo iron bullet money" in his *World of Islam* (published in 1977), as mentioned above. He referred to it as currency of the north-east Indonesian Sultanates, dividing it into two denominations, a larger of about 40 gms and a smaller of about 10 gms. (See p.474-6 of that volume.)

In 1981 (issue 72), Joe Cribb entered the arena. He had first come across these iron balls in Paris in 1972. They were, he noted, *etched* with "swirls and Arabic inscriptions", the inscriptions being of a religious nature insofar as they related to the first four Caliphs or Successors of the Prophet Mohammed (1).

Cribb linked the iron balls to similarly etched iron discs of Islamic, Javanese and Chinese types, all of which incorporated into their designs the same characteristic "swirls" as the balls. All seemed to come from the same workshop, all seemed to have a religious significance of one kind or another, and by virtue of the use of an etching process, which is time consuming, a monetary purpose seemed unlikely for any of them. Indeed, after examining about 100 pieces of the "iron ball money", Cribb had found that their weights ranged from about 10 gms to about 80 gms, and were fairly evenly spread throughout this weight range. That is, there was no clustering of weights such as one would expect with the denominations proposed by Mitchiner. Finally, though iron *bar* currency might have been used in 18th & 19th century Borneo, as the sources cited by Wiggins and Mitchiner said, balls weren't bars, though actually three of the specimens I had were sufficiently irregular to render any detailed argument on that score rather hazardous (2).

Starting from the observation that no 19th or 20th century writer on Indonesian coins had (unequivocally) mentioned these iron balls and the associated discs etc before the sprinkling of references to them in the 1970's, Cribb's guess was that they had been made only shortly before he had first come across them in 1972, and, furthermore, that if they weren't amuletic or talismanic in nature (as their religious associations seemed to suggest), then they were perhaps "objects of antiquity" made for sale to tourists and unwary collectors of coins and antiquities.

In *ONS Newsletter* no. 108 (1987) events took a further twist in an article entitled "A Strange Tale of Talismans" by P. R. Bauquis of Paris. He had undertaken some on-

the-spot research into the etched balls and discs when in Java in 1981. After some success in Jakarta, he wrote:

"But it was during a trip to Surabaya in September 1981, that I was able to make the finest harvest of these things. The town harboured a veritable mine of them. Several dealers offered them to me; they came in a procession to the hotel as soon as news of my interest had done the rounds."

Bauquis soon realised that there was a greater variety of these things than had hitherto been supposed. Study of his rich harvest led him to the conclusion that a monetary interpretation of these objects was, as Cribb had earlier suggested, untenable, and that a talismanic interpretation was much more likely.

In the second part of his article (in issue 109), Bauquis revealed his "unexpected conclusion", which had been arrived at thanks to his friend Claude Guillot. In September 1982, Guillot had made some enquiries about these various objects in Jakarta, and managed to get himself invited to a workshop near Surabaya, where, he was assured, many of these objects were made. Bauquis wrote:

"Imagine his surprise when he found ten or so people working there fabricating the whole range of 'talismans' that we had come across from the 'oldest' to the 'newest', with designs and inscriptions in Arabic, Chinese or Javanese. Once the owner was assured that his little business was of interest not to a competitor or a dealer, but to a man from a university with no commercial interest in the matter, he told his story."

Some thirty years earlier, the owner's father had worked for a cement company near Surabaya, associated with which were scrap-heaps of damaged or split metal balls used in the crushers. One day he took some of these balls home with him, and using a wax-pipette of a type used in batik work, experimented with putting patterns and inscriptions on them, then immersing them in acid. The order of events is not clear, but the "swirl" pattern, later to become so characteristic of these objects, was either based on, or came about by accident and reminded him of, the thumb-print of a legendary blacksmith in Javanese mythology. Bauquis wrote:

"Satisfied with the results, it then occurred to him to give these objects as presents to friends and neighbours. He told them they were very old, magical good-luck charms. Later on, these people spoke highly of the virtues of these talismans and called for more. Our man kept his secret to himself and set to work to meet this unexpected demand. His success grew and grew, obliging him to create a veritable workshop where the whole family were employed while carefully maintaining due secrecy. In order to increase the credibility of these talismans, he obtained for himself an old work on Indonesian magic (kitab mujarabat) which enabled him to copy numerous traditional motives known to those initiated into esoteric mysteries."

For some 20 years the business developed nicely, though on a relatively local basis. New shapes were introduced to supplement the balls - discs, rectangles, miniature knife blades etc - and new designs used for variety - Chinese dragons, Javanese shadow-puppets and so forth. "Then," as Bauquis puts it, "the inevitable happened." By the 1970's, batches started to find their way to Europe and the USA. The rest, as they say, is history.

My specimens of "Borneo iron bullet money" *are* fakes, then - not fake coins, but fake talismans, fake in the sense of their being passed off initially as old charms with magical powers. To be fair to their manufacturers, though, if the friends and neighbours hadn't vouched for their efficacy so enthusiastically, the "fraud" would never have achieved the scale it did. Indeed, if the recipients said the talismans worked for them, well, perhaps they *did*, in which case, can they still be called fake talismans? Perhaps the only fraud the manufacturers can stand accused of is passing them off as *old*. This detail is in itself quite interesting, for as we saw in the previous article, Chinese amulets were fairly routinely given a false patina to make them look old, old amulets being deemed more efficacious than new ones!

Our next case is a puzzler. This one began with a letter from Valerie Karatzas, who is a keen collector of old newspapers as well as having an interest in cases of coin forgery. Valerie sent me the following clipping from *The Courier* of London, for January 22nd, 1805, which is well worth reproducing in full:

"Public Office, Marlborough Street.— Thomas Boord, and his wife were on Saturday apprehended as coiners, at their cottage, in a lane, near St. John's Wood, Mary-le-bone Fields. On the police officers attempting to force an entrance, the wife called out to her husband to guard himself with his pistols. He did so, and flew to the window, where he swore that it would be death for anyone to stir an inch towards the house. One of the officers gave the prisoner to understand that if he fired, his own life must instantly be forfeited, and therefore it was useless to resist. Fox immediately advanced to the window and cocked his pistol, also giving him a few seconds to deliberate, whether he would resign or be shot. The prisoner, after a pause, fired his pistol in the air, and began to throw the coining implements out of another window; but the officers soon forced an entrance and secured all. It appeared that the prisoner, at the time of alarm, was finishing a quantity of sixpences, large and plain, resembling the Irish coin; nearly one hundred of which were seized on his person, and in the room. There were also a quantity of crooked sixpences, exceedingly well finished, most of which were stamped with a letter, or having a hole punched in them. The man was remanded for a second examination. The woman was discharged, there being no evidence against her."

All very lively stuff, but it was those *crooked* sixpences which caught my eye more than anything, most of them being "stamped with a letter or having a hole punched in them." What on earth was that all about? We may never know for sure, of course, at this distance in time, but I have an hypothesis.

Firstly, the words "crooked sixpence" recall that old nursery rhyme:

"There was a crooked man, and he walked a crooked mile,
He found a crooked sixpence beside a crooked stile."

John Harland and T. T. Wilkinson (3) tell us that "a crooked sixpence, or a copper coin with a hole through, is accounted a lucky coin." Elsewhere (4), the same authors tell us that "bad luck soon follows the finding of a sixpence, unless it happens to be crooked", citing an obscure proverb to that effect:

"A coin that's crook
Brings more t' rook (heap)"

The practice of bending coins for luck, and even for the supposed curing of the sick, is apparently a very old custom dating back to at least the Middle Ages (5). Bent coins - often doubly bent into an elongated S-shape - are also well known to have served as love tokens (6). Christina Hole (7), in referring to various charms supposed to ensure the constancy of one's partner in love, tells us that in the north of England:

". . . a silver coin was broken in two and the halves kept by the lovers, particularly when there was any likelihood of their being parted for a time. A crooked coin was especially valuable for this (8), and it is probable that it served as a charm against witchcraft as well as a pledge of constancy."

Quite what the bending was supposed to accomplish or symbolise is one of those tantalising snippets of folk belief which remains shrouded in mystery, but it is interesting that people who resorted to holy wells in search of a cure for some ailment would drop a *bent* pin into the water by way of an offering. The sources are most insistent that the pin had to be *bent* (9), and it is sometimes said that if your plea for divine aid was made with the requisite degree of faith, then all the accumulated bent pins thrown in by other people in the past would rise up to meet yours as it tumbled through the water (10). That sounds like a bit of folklorish sarcasm to me - something with which our ancestors tested each others gullibility - but you never know: there's now't so queer as folk, as they used to say here in Lancashire, and some folk really do believe the oddest things....

But getting back to our forger-friend, Thomas Boord Esquire, I wonder if, in addition to forging the coins of the realm, he was also operating a side-line in lucky charms or love tokens, pre-bent sixpences (admittedly counterfeit ones!) which were ready-holed for suspension about the person? And the initials stamped on them? Well, I wonder if these were to personalise them - a case of "buy a lucky charm with the initial of you or your sweetheart stamped on it." Or maybe buy a pair, one each, and exchange them as love tokens?

Now this is where my hypothesis hits a bit of a snag. Coins stamped or engraved with *single* letters (and the newspaper clipping does say "a letter", singular) are rare in comparison with those stamped with two or three initials. In fact, to be honest, in



Fig. 2

my own collection I have lots of coins with multiple initials on them, but only one - an 1852 shilling - stamped with what seems to be the single initial, J (Fig. 2), and even that is a little uncertain, for closer inspection reveals that the "J" is actually made using the same punches used to make the 1 and the 8 on the reverse! So either the person who made it had no letter punches, and had to improvise a J, or the obverse, upside down, is a bungled first attempt at the reverse 1852, which just happens to look like a J! In addition, of course, this coin is neither holed for suspension, nor bent to bring its owner luck or love....

I wrote to my friend M. I. Cobwright to ask if he had any single initial coins in his collection, especially bent ones. He replied that he had "a few single initial pieces, but insignificantly few, and none bent as 'love tokens'."

Lloyd Entenmann (11), too, cites only one instance of a coin engraved with a single initial, an R. It is a silver crown of 1663, but again it is neither bent nor holed for suspension.

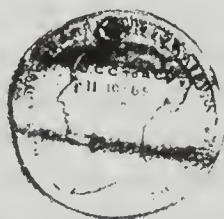


Fig. 3

Finally, by way of an odd coincidence, just as I was putting together this article I acquired the piece shown in Fig. 3. This is a gilded Victorian "Young Head" sixpence with its obverse engraved "J.G.C. to A.C. / 11.10.89", and which is both holed for suspension and doubly bent as a love token. But of course, though a holed, bent and engraved sixpence, it is not a single initialled one of the type I am suggesting Thomas Boord might have been making, and I must emphasise again that I have been unable to find a single example of this hypothesised type.

Nevertheless, my hypothesis continues to make sense, for pre-punching lucky charms or love tokens with multiple initials would have been risky in that the number of possible combinations of letters would run into thousands. Many combinations might never find a customer at all, whilst the Law of Universal Cussedness would inevitably result in a queue of customers for combinations that the manufacturer hadn't actually thought of. But single initials, for Christian names, would get round that problem nicely, for P would do just as well for Peter, as for Penelope, Paul or Patricia.

We will probably never know for sure just what Thomas Boord was up to with his crooked (in both senses of the word!) sixpences, but the foregoing hypothesis does at least explain something which is otherwise very puzzling. If any reader can suggest an alternative hypothesis which fits the facts of the case, please do share it with us!



Fig. 4

Some time ago, now, I bought a cast copy in silver of a gold mohur (12) of the Moghul Emperor Akbar (1556-1605 AD). It is shown in Fig. 4. This is unlikely to be a piece intended to deceive collectors, then, being in the wrong metal, unless, of course, someone aimed to pass it off as an unusual "rupee". Indeed, the dealer's ticket that came with it had it pegged as a Moghul period jeweller's cast copy, which seemed reasonable (13), though I suspected that it would have been carried about amuletically, rather than just as a "pretty bauble", on account of its obverse representation of the kalima, or Islamic profession of faith. That is, that it was a relative of those well known Indian "temple tokens" which copy Akbar rupees for their kalima etc, and whose amuletic uses I outlined in a previous article (14).



Fig. 5

But then along came another cast copy of an Indian coin (Fig. 5) - this time a copy, in silver, of a silver rupee of the Suri ruler Islam Shah (1545-1554 AD) (15a). Though an obvious cast, being in the correct metal it could conceivably have been intended to deceive collectors - but was it? The "coin" had at some stage been smeared in a red pigment, some of which still lodged in many of the cavities formed by the raised letters of its inscription. This was puzzling, because the coin itself, like that in Fig. 4, carries the *Islamic* kalima on its obverse, whereas the red pigment appears to be kumkum, or vermilion, which would seem to indicate a *Hindu* usage! (Vermilion paste, which signifies auspiciousness, is used to anoint the images of gods and goddesses in religious ceremonies. It is also the pigment used for the well-known tilak or red spot dabbed on the forehead by way of blessing.)

Nor was this piece an isolated instance of this odd combination of Islam and Hinduism, for in the same batch of acquisitions as Fig. 5 was a (genuine!) silver tanka of Hussain, Sultan of Bengal (1493-1518 AD) which, though it did not bear the kalima, merely an Arabic inscription commemorative of various military conquests (15b), had likewise been smeared in kumkum. (The dealer who sold me these pieces said that he quite often got Islamic coins which had been smeared like this, but that he normally just cleaned it off and sold the coin. However, knowing my interest in odd-ball things, on this occasion he had left the pigment in situ, at no extra charge....)

Puzzled by all this, I wrote to Swami Dayatmananda of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre at Bourne End in Buckinghamshire, who had fielded several of my queries in the past. Why, I asked, would a Hindu use an Islamic coin - most notably, of a type bearing the kalima - in some sort of religious ceremony or observance?

His reply was that for many Indians anything old is sacred, so an *old* coin is a thing to be revered, and is, on that account, worth copying. Whether the coin is Islamic or not is immaterial - it is old - and in any case, many Indians are illiterate, and would not know whether the inscription on an old coin was Arabic, Urdu or Sanskrit.

This last remark set me thinking about Chinese amulets again, and whether, sometimes Chinese coins had been copied simply because they were old, and without the copyists necessarily being able to read them (both possibilities were raised in the previous article, but is it worth repeating them here.) I also wondered if this made sense of some of the holed coins in my collection.



Fig. 6

By way of explanation, I collect coins and tokens which have been holed for suspension, often simply to see what types turn up in that state. Latterly I have come to the conclusion that virtually any type of coin or token has been holed - or mounted - by someone, somewhere, at some time, for some reason. In fact, it constantly amazes me how many peculiarly dull coin types have had a hole punched through them so that they can be hung around someone's neck. Some coins, of course, do make nice jewellery items, and we should never underestimate the role of human vanity in this respect. But others are more puzzling. For example, I have a holed bronze fals of 'Izz al din Kay Kawus I, who was the Sultan of the Seljuks of Rum (Asia Minor) from AD 1210 to 1219 (Fig. 6). The holing of this piece for suspension has long puzzled me as it is such an unprepossessing coin to wear around one's neck. Its flan is irregular, and it isn't a well struck specimen. Its calligraphy is scruffy, and furthermore, its inscription appears to have no religious content at all, being merely

the name of the Caliph Al Nazir on the obverse, and of the Sultan himself on the reverse (15c). Possibly worn as a token of allegiance to them, then (the holing is certainly very old), but would it be too much to suggest that it was holed and worn rather more recently simply because it was something old? Or perhaps, as was suggested in the last article in respect of some Chinese amulets, the person wearing it couldn't read Arabic, but fancied they saw something magical in the strange-looking inscription on it? One thing is for sure: this coin wasn't chosen for its good looks! I have several other holed pieces which make similarly odd jewellery items, but these are perhaps best dealt with in a later article on holed coins generally, rather than here, where the issue is the fake v. amulet borderline.

Notes.

- (1) These first four Caliphs are accorded greater reverence than later ones, hence the use of their names on amulets. For an amuletic use of their names on Indian "temple tokens", see my article "Religious Medals VI" in *NI Bulletin*, February 1998, p.36-43.
- (2) For the record, the shapes, sizes and weights of my 6 specimens are as follows:
 - a) The cannon ball, diameter about 25 mm, weight 71.1 gms. A larger version of b) and c) below.
 - b) & c) The musket balls, diameter 12-13 mm, weight 8.2 gms. One of these is the piece illustrated.
 - d) Seemingly a spherical cap, fragmented from a piece like a). Traces of Arabic letters, with striations, on curved surface; swirl pattern on underside. Weight 9.3 gms.
 - e) More like a distorted cube with concave faces than a sphere! Arabic characters on one face, swirl designs on the others. Weight 9.1 gms.
 - f) Like a bent rectangular bar with rounded ends and corners. Only vague traces of squiggles visible on surfaces. Weight 6.8 gms.
- (3) *Lancashire Folklore* (1882), p.153.
- (4) *Lancashire Legends* (1873), p.227.
- (5) See my article "Bent Coins and Amulets" in *NI Bulletin*, February 1993, p.33-4. Lloyd Entenmann, in his book *Love Tokens as Engraved Coins* (1991), p.10, also cites a couple of instances of this.
- (6) See Philip Meldrum's article "Love Tokens" in *Coin Monthly*, October 1972, p.48-50, which cites a literary example of the practice from Joseph Addison's *Adventures of a Shilling* (1710).
- (7) In her book, *English Folklore* (1940), p.17-18.

- (8) On the supposed origins of all this amongst the ancient Danes, see Harland and Wilkinson, as note 3, p.263.
- (9) See, for example, John Rhys *Celtic Folklore: Welsh and Manx* (1901), vol. 1, p.363 and Christina Hole, as note 7, p.102. Harland & Wilkinson, as note 4, p.236, tell us that the casting of bent pins into a well of clear water was also believed to insure prosperity.
- (10) Charles Hardwick *Traditions, Superstitions and Folklore* (1872), p.270 & p.274. Hardwick, too, emphasises the bending of the pins.
- (11) As note 5, p.43 and plate K, no. 64.
- (12) See *The Standard Guide to South Asian Coins and Paper Money Since 1556 AD* by Colin R. Bruce II et al., 1981, p.30, type 106.
- (13) Roma Niyogi, in her book *Money of the People* (1989), p.22, refers to a particular ornamental preference, amongst the Indians, for the stylish coins of the Great Moghuls.
- (14) See the article cited in note 1.
- (15) Michael Mitchiner *Oriental Coins and Their Values: The World of Islam* (1977), a) p.350, types 2671-2675; b) p.359, type 2770; c) p.171, type 966.

The first section of this article was originally written for *The Dud*, the Bulletin of the Counterfeit Collector's Society, and is scheduled to appear in vol. 3, no. 2 (September 1998). It is here reproduced by kind permission of the editor.

A Postscript.

About a year after writing "Fakes v. Amulets" parts I and II, two typewritten cards turned up which had apparently once been with the collection of Chinese pieces described in my first article. Both contained some interesting information which is here offered as a postscript to the articles. My thanks go to the unnamed author of these cards.

The first card concerns Pan Liang charms like Figs. 14 & 15 in Part I. It suggests that the prototype coins came to be used as charms because of the auspicious age in which they were produced, the Western Han Dynasty (206 BC - AD 25), for "under this Dynasty the Buddhist religion first became known to the Chinese; the Confucian books were rescued from their hiding places; and Ssu-ma Ch'ien wrote his famous Historical Record."

The second card concerns Wu Shu (= Five Shu or Five Grains) charms like Fig. 17 in Part I, but is also of interest for the parallel it gives with the staining of coin-charms with kumkum or vermilion in India, as described in Part II above.

The card says that the prototype coins came to be used as charms because Wu Shu could be read not only as Five Grains but also as Five Vermilion, the characters for grain and vermillion having the same pronunciation and being written with the same phonetic element. The card adds that, for the Chinese, vermillion was a lucky colour signifying good fortune, and that good fortune traditionally came in five varieties: good luck, long life, success, wealth and sons.

I would welcome any further comment from readers of *NI Bulletin*.

COPECK

COPECK, s. This is a Russian coin, 1/100 of a ruble. The degeneration of coin denominations is often so great that we may suspect this name to preserve that of the *dīnār Kopekī* often mentioned in the histories of Timur and his family. *Kopek* is in Turki, 'dog,' and Charmoy explains the term as equivalent to *Abū-kalb*, 'Father of a dog,' formerly applied in Egypt to Dutch crowns (*Löwenthaler*) bearing a lion. There could not be Dutch coins in Timur's time, but some other Frank coin bearing a lion may have been so called, probably Venetian. A Polish coin with a lion on it was called by a like name (see *Macarius*, quoted below, p. 169). Another etymology of *kopek* suggested (in *Chaudoir, Aperçu des Monnaies Russes*) is from Russ. *kopîé*, *kopyé*, a pike, many old Russian coins representing the Prince on horseback with a spear. [This is accepted by the *N.E.D.*] **Kopeks** are mentioned in the reign of Vassili III., about the middle of the 15th century, but only because regularly established in the coinage c. 1536.

1390.—(Timour resolved) "to visit the venerated tomb of Shiekh Maslahat . . . and with that intent proceeded to Tāshkand . . . he there distributed as alms to worthy objects, 10,000 *dīnārs kopakī*. . ."—*Sharīfuddīn*, in Extracts by M. Charmoy, *Mem. Acad. St. P.*, vi. S., tome iii. p. 363, also note, p. 135.

1535.—"It was on this that the Grand Duchess Helena, mother of Ivan Vassilievitch, and regent in his minority, ordered, in 1535, that these new *Dengui* should be melted down and new ones struck, at the rate of 300 *dengui*, or 3 Roubles of Moscow à la grivenka, in **Kopeks**. . . From that time accounts continued to be kept in *Roubles*, **Kopeks**, and *Dengui*."—*Chaudoir, Aperçu*.

c. 1655.—"The pension in lieu of provisions was, for our Lord the Patriarch 25 **copecks** daily."—*Travels of the Patriarch Macarius*, Or. Tr. Fund, i. 281.

1783.—"The **Copeck** of Russia, a copper coin, in name and apparently in value, is the same which was current in Tartary during the reign of Timur."—*Forster's Journey*, ed. 1808, ii. 332.

(From *HOBSON-JOBSON, A glossary of colloquial Anglo-Indian words and phrases, and of kindred terms, etymological, historical, geographical and discursive*, by Col. Henry Yule and A. C. Burnell, Originally Published, 1903, Reprint, February, 1968.)

PASSION'S PARAGON - CHAPTER #8

Robert Turfboer, Tarboro, North Carolina, NI #1960

Van Loon was born in 1683 and that means that around 1700 he must have been a student at Louvain, his first Alma Mater. Louvain, or Leuven, is situated in present Belgium, then known as the Spanish-, or after 1715, the Austrian Netherlands. After the one in Paris, the University of Louvain was the largest in Europe. In 1516 it had already 3000 students. Humanist studies and printing were then its largest faculties.

As an alumnus of that French (and Latin) speaking Alma Mater, Mr. Gerard must have been very well aware of the role Louis XIV played during the final 15 years of the Sun King's life. Louis died on September 1, 1715, at age 77, soon after the Peace of Utrecht. In the next - and final - P.P. #9 we will come back to this.

At this point in the translation we are only 77 pages away from the end of all those 2,400 ones van Loon had composed. Are there signs that he was thinking: "Enough is enough"? Not really. We, of course, do not even know if he worked through this book in sequence. In fact we know virtually nothing about the way this set of 4 huge volumes was composed.

I wonder too about the engraver, or engravers. The monotony and the extreme exactness of that profession must have required a very special personality. When you look at all those 3000+ famous persons whose "busts" had to be recorded, it appears as if all these men look alike: The enormous hairpiece they presumably wore for such sittings must have been quite expensive, awkward and very warm! The effect of it is that they look as if they are all wearing the same one and only hairpiece the artist owned. One wonders: did they really sit for their portraits with that heavy hairpiece on?

Their portraits also imply that virtually all, except maybe a handful, of these powerful grandies, were overweight. They almost all show a not very engaging mien and they leave one with a ridiculous feeling of an apparent lack of intelligence.

The age of these people too seems identical, around 45, even when they are barely 20 years old. The ladies also tend to be heavy-set, young and old, with double chins and *never* smiling.

It must have been an ordeal to pose for these portraits. Van Loon himself sat for a painting by his friend Frans van Mieris. P. Koubraken did the engraving. We showed him in the *NI Bulletin* of March 1997 on page 56. Mr. Gerard, fortunately, looks at you with an ever so slight soupçon of a grin on his ample cheeks. He too is portly and, of course, wears that same wig.

The engravers remain almost totally anonymous. Occasionally they put their initials on a medal, very rarely will they use their full name. The engraving of those texts must have been even more tedious than doing their portraits. The repetitions are endless and yet the errors are nearly 100% absent.

At the end of their working day, the printers of books like these must have gone home and - with a deep sigh - asked their wives for a large tankard before stretching out with their equivalent of "the evening news".

And what about the translator? Sure, I too have my doubts and idiosyncrasies. My role in this translation is strictly voluntary, and - I guess - could also be classified as a strange form of passion. Yet, it has given my life a degree of fulfillment with no strings attached. It really has been a pleasure.

But enough of that. I much rather share with you the following story and a medal with an unusual statement on it. During the winter of 1708 King Louis had made enormous, but secret, fleet preparations. He wanted the young Prince of Wales to resume his hereditary role in England where he had to leave when still an infant. Thus Louis planned this once and for ever invasion of England, a military enterprise sine qua non. This was going to be his Magnum Opus. It was all cloaked in utmost secrecy.

But, as happened, once in while, England and the United Provinces found it out in time. So they "welcomed" the enemy in Scotland, beat the daylights out of them and sent what was left of them home. On the exergue of one of the [many] triumphant medals, the Allies made about this grandiose experience, Queen Anna is giving the following message to the Prince:

"Hurry up. Get out of here and tell your King that the sovereignty of the Seas is not his; but it has been given to me by destiny."

Then, as the story has reached the year 1711, on page 614, Gerard van Loon makes the one and only exception he allowed in his role of the neutral reporter that I have found! The French are not doing well at all. The Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene of Savoy, the two Commanders in Chief of the Allied Army, have been virtually unbeatable. It is this context when Mr. Gerard makes this unique slip away from neutrality by saying:

. . . . en de onzen. . . . Translated this means: . . . and OUR troops. . .! Till now, he has never ever taken sides, or even implied having one.

Never before as Gerard van Loon made a personal judgment or statement without an explanation or even an excuse.

So you say: Maybe the end is near? You bet it is!

The first years of the 80-year war.

Kees Pannekeet, Slootdorp, The Netherlands

In the years 1568/69 William of Orange and his brothers tried to fight the Spanish army's of Alva but they failed. The States of the provinces did not support him enough and the common people did not rise up as one man. He had to retreat to Germany as a poor and disillusioned man who had also lost 2 of his brothers in the fight. In the years after that there are some small fights with the Spaniards in Holland and Zeeland. A group of pirates (called "watergeuzen"), supported by William of Orange, attack the Spanish troops and sometimes rob or plunder a city. Because the Spaniards are getting more violent and are introducing several unpopular taxes the provinces of Holland and Zeeland accept in 1572 prince William of Orange again as their "stadhouder" (= ruler of their province). They are now willing to give him a large sum of money to form an army to fight the Spanish troops. From these two provinces he slowly started to united the provinces together in the struggle for independence against the Spaniards.

The royal mint that existed in the province of Holland was taken over by the States of that province. The States of a province were a sort of "government" that ruled their own province. In it there were mostly nobles and important people from that province. Above the States there was the Staten-Generaal (States-General) in which there were delegates from all the provinces.



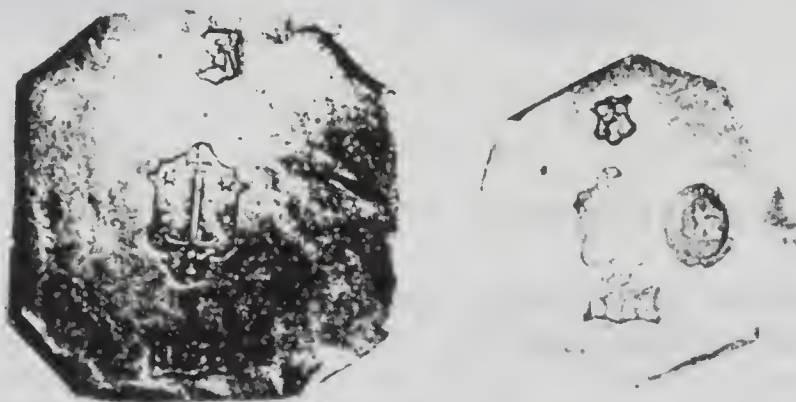
Spain Real with Holland countermark.
1/5 Philipsdaalder with Zeeland countermark.

To finance the war the States of Holland and Zeeland agreed in 1573 to strike new silver coins which they issued far above their real (silver) value. The older silver coins had to be marked with a countermark, a lion = Holland and a swimming lion = Zeeland. The owner of the coins had to pay 15% of the value of the coin as a war contribution. Coins without that countermark were declared forbidden. Also in 1573/1574 the province of Holland started to mint copper coins. Also the copper coins were issued far above their real (copper) value. Those coins were the OORD, DUIT and PENNING. One silver stiver was 4 oords, 1 oord was 2 duits and 1 duit was 2 penningen.



Province of Holland Oord, Duit and Penning (1573-1579)

During the war the Spaniards tried to re-capture some major city's in Holland. In the first years of the war they besieged the city of Haarlem (1572), Alkmaar (1573) and Leiden (1573/1574) in the province of Holland. Only Haarlem had to surrender and was plundered and many thousands of people were murdered. During the siege the city's had to strike coins to pay the soldiers in the city. Also the people needed new money because of the siege there was no new money coming to the city. City's in The Netherlands that have struck coins during the 80-year war are: Amsterdam, Alkmaar, Breda, Deventer, Groningen, Haarlem, Kampen, Leiden, Maastricht, Middleburg, Oudewater, Schoonhoven, Woerden, Zierikzee and Zutphen. The siege-coins were mostly made out of silver that was collected among the citizens of the city. Also copper and tin were used in case there was not enough silver. The city of Leiden has struck some remarkable coins made out of paper.



Haarlem, Siege coins of 32 and 16 stuivers, 1572

In the Northern provinces the Spaniards were never very successful in re-capturing city's and provinces. In the South however they were more successful. City after city was re-captured and most southern provinces were under Spanish rule again. By the year 1579 the Northern provinces saw they had to unite to form a strong opposition against the Spaniards. They decided to form a union together and in 1579 the union of Utrecht was signed. In it they declared to stay together in their struggle against the Spaniards and to act together as if they were only one province.

SOME UNIQUE or VERY RARE EUROPEAN DOLLARS #17

John S. Davenport, Mount Dora, Florida, NI #602

Zwolle, the capital of the province of Overijssel in the east Netherlands, was one of the three imperial cities with Deventer and Kampen. Two cathedrals, one Protestant and the other Catholic, date from the Middle Ages. Three miles outside the city an Augustinian monastery once stood. Here Thomas A. Kempis, famed German ecclesiastic, author of the *Imitation of Christ* lived for 64 years. Zwolle had an extensive coinage in all of the several coin types current in the Netherlands in the period from 1591 to 1694.

The hybrid dollar of 1662/1668 is a silver ducat with Zwolle obverse and a reverse of a Utrecht rijksdaalder.



Silver Ducat 1662/1668

MONETA· ARG· - CIVIT· ZWOL ❖ , knight standing with sword, shield below, all dividing date.

CONCORDIA· RES· PARVÆ· CRESCVNT, crowned lion arms dividing date.

Delmonte 995 sup.

Unique

Dav. 4921/4838

Dav. 4920A

Book News & Reviews

A Dictionary of Canadian Medallists. By Robert C. Willey. Ed. by Ronald Greene. Canadian Numismatic Research Society, 1998. Available from the Canadian Numismatic Research Society, c/o Ronald Greene, P.O. Box 1351, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8W 2W7. Price is \$38.95 Canadian (U.S. \$33.00) in hard cover or \$26.95 Canadian (U.S. \$21.95) in soft cover, postpaid.

The first edition of this book is limited to 500 copies, of which 50 are hard cover. Each copy is numbered. The work is 180 pages with 10 pages of photographs on 8-1/2 x 11 inch good quality paper. In the book, the late Robert Willey attempts to give some information on every person and firm from any country that has designed, engraved, struck, or manufactured any coins, tokens, or medals relating to Canada or colonial Canada and its provinces and territories. Data on municipal and personal issues are also included.

The names of the firms and persons included in the book are arranged alphabetically. A brief history of the firm or person is given followed by a listing of the coins, tokens, and medals they designed, engraved, struck, or manufactured. A list of initials, followed by the full name, which appear on Canadian numismatic pieces is also given at the beginning of the section for each letter of the alphabet. A four page bibliography and ten pages of clear photographs of Canadian coins, tokens, and medals conclude the book.

The data in this book were first published in serial form in *the Transactions of the Canadian Numismatic Research Society* between 1978 and 1982. Robert Willey was revising the work at the time of his unexpected death in December 1993. Willey's manuscript has been completed and updated over the past few years by Ronald Greene, Secretary of the Canadian Numismatic Research Society, with input from other Society members.

Reviewed by Jerry Remick.

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1998 Official Canadian Coin Guide: Dealer's Buying Prices for Canadian and Provincial Coinage, Tokens, and Paper Money and United States Coins. Unitrade Press, 1998. Available from The Unitrade Press, 99 Floral Parkway, Toronto, Canada M6L 2C4. Price is U.S. \$5.95 postpaid.

The 191 page, 4 x 6 1/4 inch soft cover book presents a single valuation for each catalogued piece, in average condition, that most dealers will pay for the piece. The following types of pieces are catalogued: Canadian decimal coinage, collectors' issues, gold sovereigns, pre-Confederation provincial coinage, tokens of British North America, official commemorative medals, paper money of Canada, and United States decimal and commemorative coins. A seven page glossary is included at the end of the book.

Mintage figures are included for the Canadian coins. Photographs are included for type for most Canadian and U.S. coins.

Reviewed by Jerry Remick.

THE BIRONS OF COURLAND

by John S. Davenport

(Copyright article reprinted by permission of Amos Press, Inc./Coin World from Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine, April 1949.)

COURLAND, situated at the southeastern bend of the Baltic sea, comprising parts of what became modern Latvia and Lithuania, was originally inhabited by the Cours or Kurs. Early in the thirteenth century they were converted to Christianity by the Brethren of the Sword, an appropriately named German military order. When this order united with the Teutonic Knights, Courland passed to the latter group. When the knights sought the protection of Polish sovereignty in 1561, the Grand Master Gotthard Kettler took the title of Duke of Courland. The title remained in the Kettler family until the extinction of the line in 1737, with the exception of the period 1726-27 when it was held through force of arms by Marshall Saxe. Courland was nominally a part of Poland from 1561 to 1795 though frequently under dominant Russian influence.

Duke Frederick William of Courland in 1710 married the grand duchess Anna, niece of Tsar Peter the Great of Russia, and afterwards Tsarina of Russia herself. He died in the following year, however, on the return journey from St. Petersburg. His young widow was ordered to proceed to the duchy and take over its government. In Mitau she was bored and embarrassed financially in her effort to keep up a court. The Russian resident, sent to aid her, Count Peter Bestuzhev, became her lover.

Into this dull little court about 1715 came one, Ernst Johann Biron, grandson of a groom of an earlier duke of Courland, and of an ignoble and impoverished family. He already had a notorious reputation and he soon through his dominating personality and will power supplanted the count in Anna's favors. His influence remained paramount during the rest of her life.

When Anna became Tsarina in 1730, in succession to her cousin, Biron and his wife and family followed her to Moscow. Here honors were heaped upon him, richest were his for the taking, and power lay in his grasp. His treacherous and rapacious government soon made him hated by all loyal Russians, who especially resented the foreign, particularly German, influence in the Councils of State. On the death of the last Duke of Courland of the Kettler family in 1737, the Estates of the duchy under pressure and bribery elected Biron as duke. He soon became as hated in the duchy as he was in Russia proper.

On her deathbed in 1740 Anna appointed Biron regent of the Empire during the minority of her great nephew Ivan VI. His regency lasted for only three weeks before it was overthrown in a palace revolution. He was arrested while in bed, tried for treason, and condemned to death by quartering. In the following year, however, his sentence was commuted to life imprisonment and banishment to Siberia. He took off with his family. Shortly after the accession of Elizabeth to the throne the same year he was given his freedom but lived under surveillance and in obscurity until 1762 when the new Tsar Peter III recalled him to court. The following year the Tsarina Catherine II restored him to the duchy of Courland, which he again took over and seems to have ruled better than he had twenty-five years before. In 1769 he surrendered the reins of government to his oldest son Peter, and after a very turbulent and checkered life, died peacefully in his capital city in 1772.

The last duke of Courland, Peter Biron, had been born in 1724. He reigned through the troublesome times of the partitions of Poland, and finally in 1795 at the time of the final partition when the duchy passed completely under Russian sovereignty he abdicated in favor of the Tsarina of Russia who had restored his father to his position. Peter retired to Berlin and to his principality of Sagan, which he had purchased in 1786. He died at Gelleveau in Silesia in 1800. He apparently had neither the vigor nor the villainy of his father. His descendants married into the Talleyrand family of France and eventually became known as the princes of Sagan.



Courland - 1780 Taler of Peter Biron

The Kettler dukes had a substantial coinage in gold, silver and copper. The elder Biron coined a gold ducat and five minor pieces in silver and copper. In 1780 Peter Biron issued a gold ducat and a taler. These have on their obverse a head of Peter to the right and his titles as duke of Livonia, Courland and Semigallia. On the reverse in addition to the inscription indicating that it is new money of the duchy of Courland according to the taler standard, there is a double shield crowned, with a leaf garland, and a Burgundian cross in the background. The shields contain the eagle of Poland and the mailed rider of Lithuania.

MEMBER NOTICE PAGE

Albert Gammon, P. O. Box 1343, Sun City, AZ 85372: BEGINNERS BONANZA: Over 3000 world coins mostly inexpensive modern minors; Over 1000 world crowns & 1/2 crowns reasonably priced; Ten page diversified world coin list includes coins, bank notes, tokens, medals, exnumia. Send 2 stamps for any list.

Granvyl G. Hulse, Jr., 30 Pleasant St., Colebrook, NH 03576: I am trying to find out if anyone is familiar with a British medal that shows Britannia seated, facing left, holding out an olive branch to a soldier with a musket, standing to attention. If anyone has seen this medal I would appreciate knowing about it, and if possible, obtaining a picture.

Albert Gammon, P. O. Box 1343, Sun City, AZ 85372: WANTED COINS from Aland Islands, Palu Islands, Keeling Coco Islands, Kyrgyzstan, Indonesia West Iran (Barat), Riau Archipelago, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Dahomey KM1-3, Anguilla, Puerto Rico, Timor, American Samoa, inexpensive Tibet coins, East Carribean Territories 1970 \$4.00 Antigua, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Lucia, St. Kitts & St. Vincent. Please advise what you can offer at a reasonable price.

"LANCHAU COPPERS"

While perusing a book on travel in China, written by a member of the footloose Halliburton-Franck school in the early 1920's, we came across a section that might prove useful to the collectors of Chinese coins - so here it is.

In or about 1921, the warlord of the province of Kansu decided to stretch the province's supply of "coppers" (as distinct from the cast cash) by a very simple method. He called in all the copper coins he could get and melted them down. With this copper as a basis, he recoinced Kansu pieces but in a metal that, with a good imagination, could be called a low-grade brass, as it consisted not only of brass but also of a liberal supply of sand. These coins were then put back into circulation at the full face value, literally at the point of a gun. The populace, never noted for letting a good thing go by, proceeded to swell the issue with brass-and-sand counterfeits of their own. As these pieces were first "coined" in the city of Lanchau, they acquired the name of "Lanchau coppers". The coppers were valued less in direct and rapid proportion to their distance from Lanchau. Our intrepid traveller also noted that when he was there (about 1922), the Tauchun (literally "chief") or warlord was seriously considering improving the silver coinage in the same manner.

We wonder if these "Lanchau coppers" can be considered as coins - they were issued by a responsible (with a liberal measure of kindness) authority and served as a medium of exchange. It must be born in mind that many of the outlying Chinese provinces after the Republic were virtually autonomous. Or perhaps we should just call them counterfeits and let them go at that.

(From Collectors Research Limited price list no. 67-47, September 1, 1967.)